

Next week! Trap, Trigger and Tomahawk; or, Personal Adventures of Maj. Max Martine, of the Hudson Bay Fur Company, in the Far West!

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No. 128.

THE DELIVERANCE OF ALCESTIS.

BY EDWARD JAMESON.

Well-nigh distraught with anguish and sore grief,
Admetus mourns Alcestis newly dead;
And from her burial torn, finds no relief;
To still the fevered throbings of his head,
And bid the moments that he was forced away
From that loved form, although 'twere lifeless
clay.

Better in silence lie within the tomb,
Clasped close to those we hold exceeding dear,
Than painfully await our natural doom.
Dying full soon, though Death be not near,
Thus bitterly he mourns for his dead wife,
Who died, that he might have new lease of life.

Sudden across his sorrow-frenzied rage
The giant form of Hercules appears,
He who in mightiest conflict did engage
With Death himself, unmoved by all his fears.
As by the hand of the first of victory,
He leads Alcestis, beaming from her free.

And made more lovable than e'er before
By her dread passage through the shades below,
Where spirit forms about her, more and more,
Transfigured, ere she swift to earth did go,
And with her strong deliverer and friend,
Before her lord, in lowliness, doth bend.

Breathless and pale, in her white loveliness,
She mutely stands before her lord again;
Nor may she ope her lips her name to blesse,
Nor all present can extirpate her sad pain.
For she unto the gods was consecrate,
When rescued from her sad, relentless fate.

Oh, brightest gem of mythologic tale!
So steadfast, so devoted and sincere,
The memory opens wide Time's misty veil,
Revealing graces which must e'er allure,
And win us to thy ceaseless love and praise,
Most truly beauteous of Earth's golden days.

Double-Death: OR, THE SPY QUEEN OF WYOMING.

A ROMANCE OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER,

(LAUNCE POYNTZ.)

AUTHOR OF "THE RED RAJAH," "THE KNIGHT OF
THE RUEBS," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

WYOMING.

In the month of September, 1778, a party of five horsemen were riding slowly along a rough country road in the midst of a singular scene. Around them spread a country that nature had made the very home of beauty. The winding Susquehanna pursued its tranquil course through an expanse of diversified hill and dale, sprinkled with noble clumps of trees, that gave it the appearance of a park. Wild vines, loaded with luscious purple grapes, hung in masses from the boughs of oak, elm and sycamore; while the borders of the river were planted with rows of the same tree in shady luxuriance. The pipe of the quail could be heard in the open meadows among the fields of yellow wheat, and numerous deer were grazing here and there, nibbling the yellow ears as if they were accustomed to it. Now and then the deep, hollow drumming of the ruffed grouse echoed from the dense woods, or a flock of wild ducks would come whirling up from a silent eddy of the river, startled at the approach of the horsemen.

But in all the landscape, except that little party, there was no token of human habitation, except those ghastly remains, left by fire and sword, which told of the fierce storm of war that had passed over the peaceful valley of Wyoming, two short months before. The bare and blackened chimneys stood up here and there, ghosts of departed homes. The fences were prostrate, or left in heaps of ashes, where the rails had been used for firewood, and every now and then the horses of the travelers would shy violently at the sight of the bleaching bones of a human skeleton, the body parched and blackened by the fierce heat of the summer and the dry, still air of early fall.

The travelers were all well mounted and armed, as was necessary in the then state of the stricken vale of Wyoming. Four of them wore the uniform of Morgan's riflemen, a white frock or hunting-shirt, fringed and ornamented, with fur caps and buck-skin leggings. The leader was a young officer of Continental dragoons. He rode a magnificent black horse, nearly thoroughbred, and appeared to be subject to great anxiety, for his eager glance scanned every thicket ahead, and his face had a worried, unhappy look about it.

Every now and then he would turn round to speak to the leading riflemen, a small, wiry-looking man, with a dark, shrewd face and intensely black eyes, who was noticeable among the rest for carrying a double-barreled rifle, a very rare thing in those days.

"Murphy," said the young officer, at last, "do you think that the female prisoners were spared after they were carried off?"

He spoke as if he longed to hear a favorable answer, while dreading the reverse.

"Av' course they were," said Tim Murphy. " Didn't the Injin chief stop the devils from killin' after they'd been at it for two hours, bedad? But, anyway, I saw the young lady alive after that, and heard that they were going to take her off. Ould Queen Esther it was that tuk pity on her—and she the worst devil of them all, for that matter, for she bathe out the brains of twenty men, standin' tied together around a rock, one after the other—but she seemed to take a fancy to the child as she stood there, so brave and innocent-like, and tuk her into her own tint, 'to be her daughter,' she said."

"And you say that this Queen Esther's

village lies not far from here?" said the young officer.

"It lies over beyant thin hills," said the riflemen, pointing to the west, "and we can get there befor dark, if we ride fast. Not that I mane to say that we'd better do it, Misther Barbour, for the old witch don't lay half under his horse, which was still struggling violently in the agonies of death; and the last one seemed to be too much unnerved at the suddenness of the occurrence to do any thing but try to restrain his frightened animal from running away."

Tim Murphy said not a word till he had reloaded his rifle. Then he stooped down and took up the weapons of the dead Indians, emptied their bullets into his own bullet-pouch, and replenished his powderhorn from them. He rose and scanned the valley all round him with the piercing glance of a veteran scout, and observed:

"Liftnant, there's lashin's of the devils around here, and Tim Murphy's nothing that told of long practice, and the whole affair was over."

Then it was found that one of the American riflemen was mortally wounded, the same shot that had felled his horse having passed through his thigh, and cut the femoral artery, from which the blood was welling like the stream from a pump: the other lay half under his horse, which was still

struggling violently in the agonies of death; and the last one seemed to be too much unnerved at the suddenness of the occurrence to do any thing but try to restrain his frightened animal from running away."

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Everard was already on his feet by the wounded rifleman, trying in vain to stanch the welling flood of crimson that was fast draining the man's life. But, as Murphy spoke, the poor fellow lapsed into insensibility, and in a very few seconds after ceased to breathe, while the un wounded man was trying to extricate his other comrade from the crushing weight of the dying horse.

Everard rose sadly up from his slain follower's side, and said:

"I fear you're right, Murphy. Three of them would never have dared to attack five of us, if they had not plenty of help nigh at hand. I see no way for us to do but to retreat and await the coming of Colonel Butler's expedition. We have lost our horses, and have not enough left to go on with in safety. And yet I can not go back while there is a chance to save her. What shall we do?"

Murphy considered a moment, and then said, slowly:

"There's two horses left, devil a lie in it. An' there's four men to ride on 'em—two

too many. Lave me here, liftnant, wid Sam Noble there, and you and the other man go back and hurry up the boys. We'll wait for yez, and find out all about the Injin camp befor the colonel gets up."

Everard hesitated for several minutes. Then he appeared to take his resolution.

"Then he appeared to take his resolution.

"Martin Glover," he said, addressing the rifleman who had shown the least courage of any in the party, "you and Sam Noble will ride back at speed to Colonel Butler. Sam, take my horse. Tell him that there are Indians in the valley, and that I remain here with Murphy to find out their haunts. And here, Sam, give me your cap and hunting-shirt, and take my coat and helmet. They're not fit for this kind of work."

He spoke with the air of authority that compelled acquiescence, and the men were not sorry to obey. Their adventure, and the terrible stories current about the valley, had not conspired to encourage them, and they knew that about twenty miles behind a body of their comrades were coming up to the rescue, to revenge the slaughter of Wyoming. The change of garments was quickly effected therefore, and inside of ten minutes Everard, transformed into a rifleman, was watching his two men galloping away on the back track.

"Faith, liftnant," observed Tim Murphy, dryly, "thim fellows 'll not let the grass grow under their feet till they see the colonel. It's little use they'd be here, an' we two can prawl about, an' nobody be the wiser. Now, sur, av it's p'lasing to ye, we'd better be at work, for the shots 'll may be bring old Queen Esther and all her tribe out after us. We must get these fellows into the place they came from, and lave poor Jiminy Burke out beyant, so they may think we're all kilt or run away."

The advice seemed sensible, and they dragged the bodies of the Indians back into the thicket from whence they had first fired, judging rightly that there would be no more in that quarter, at least. The body of the slain rifleman was left where it fell, a ghastly necessity for the present, but they did not dare to take it away or bury it. Everard

selected the best of the rifles, which was that carried by one of the Indians, a splendidly ornamented piece, evidently of English manufacture, and filled his bullet-pouch and powder-horn before setting out. Tim Murphy shook his head angrily as he looked at the rifle.

"It's the bloody British Governor's present," he said. "He gives them to the chiefs who bring in most scalps, and hires the red devils to murder his own color. Bedad, maybe he won't like to get a bullet sent into his fri'nds from his own gun. And now, liftnant, let's be off, av it's p'lasin' to ye?"

Although perfectly respectful in his manner, from the moment they were left alone in the wilderness, Murphy unconsciously took the lead in their subsequent proceedings, and Everard submitted, in light of his experience. They became equal comrades, instead of officer and private, and left the spot together on foot, each carrying a spare rifle, besides his own particular piece.

They passed through the thicket from which they were shot at, in cautious silence, keeping in the middle of the wood and avoiding to show themselves. All was quite quiet around them, however, save for the piping of the quail and the occasional whirr of the pheasant from the woods beyond. Everard was startled at every sound, and looked nervously round, expecting more Indians at every turn; but Tim reassured him with one of his simple, common sense remarks, that explained the case at once.

"Sorra one o' them's here, liftnant. Trust the birds and bastes to hear them when they come. When ye don't hear a sound in the woods, look out; but as long as the little squirrels play about over beyant, there's no Injuns near."

And the ranger stepped on fearlessly and rapidly through the woods, glancing out between the trees to the open ground whenever they approached it.

Everard followed, becoming more used to his position, which was entirely novel, the longer he walked, and feeling a keen sense of pleasurable excitement in spite of the danger, in the peculiar atmosphere of bush-fighting, which he now tried for the first time. Indeed, no one who has not tried it, can realize the sense of freedom and independence peculiar to a man in the woods in an enemy's country, where his life depends on his acuteness. It resembles the passion for hunting, which causes so many men to forsake home comforts, and cheerfully confront cold and hunger to enjoy it; but with the additional excitement that your game will probably shoot back.

Everard felt, moreover, that his companion was an adept in woodcraft and Indian warfare, and trusted entirely to his abilities, and he was not wrong. Tim Murphy, under his Indian sobriquet of "Double-Death," was celebrated among the Indians far and wide, and much dreaded.

The two comrades thus continued on their way through the belt of woods, which proved to be about a mile in length, and then saw before them an open field of wheat, fully exposed to view on all sides, at the opposite margin of which again extended the woods that clothed the edge of the valley to the west. Beyond these woods lay the camp of the Indian queen, known to the whites as Queen Esther, whose band had been prominent in the July massacre.

Both men instinctively uttered a low exclamation as they looked out upon the fields, for there, coming leisurely along toward the very place they were posted, was a party of eight or nine Indians.

CHAPTER VII.

HIDE AND SEEK.

MURPHY was the first to catch sight of them, and he immediately drew back behind a tree, motioning to Everard to do the same. The tree behind which they shrunk happened to be very large, and had a deep cavernous hole on one side. Without any hesitation, Tim entered the hollow, and Everard followed him, when both prepared themselves for a desperate defense if they were discovered, but in the full expectation of remaining unseen. Tim whispered to Everard that he was certain the savages had not caught sight of them as they hid.

"And av they only miss the trail, we'll have a chance, liftnant."

From the dark hole in which they were, they could see their foes advancing unsuspectingly to the edge of the wood, and, as luck would have it, at a part of the wood over which they themselves had not passed. The Indians were chattering and laughing, contrary to their custom on the war-path, proving that they did not anticipate enemies near them, and soon disappeared among the trees, going in a direction that promised to bring them out close to the scene of the morning's attempted assassination.

"As soon as they were fairly out of sight, Tim crept softly out of the hollow, laid his head to the earth, and listened intently for some time. Then he started up, and beckoned to Everard.

"Follow, liftnant," he said, in a low tone, and stepped off toward the open fields. At the edge of the wood he halted, and took a long, searching look all round the horizon. Not a soul was in sight as far as the woods opposite. Tim at once struck into the path through which the Indians had come among the wheat, and went at a fast walk, nearly a run, toward the opposite woods. As he went, he kept a keen lookout ahead, for Tim was trying a desperate chance in crossing this open field as he did,



The two friends proceeded through the woods in silence, making the best use of eyes and ears possible.

when the woods in front might very likely be full of Indians. But he knew that those behind would almost inevitably catch his trail very soon, and a forward movement at any risk had become an imperative necessity.

Before the two friends had entirely crossed the field, they heard, far behind them, the loud death-halloo of the Indians, announcing that these had stumbled over the bodies, and Tim Murphy instantly dropped flat on his face in the tall, yellow wheat, followed by Everard.

"Hould still!" whispered the scout, as Everard imprudently raised his head to look around. "The devils'll all be out watchin' the opens, in the drinkin' of a glass of whisky. Hould still, and they'll never see ye."

Everard lay still and listened. The howling over the corpses became louder than ever, and then stopped suddenly and burst out again. He could see nothing where he was, for the tall yellow wheat all round him, and the suspense of waiting became very trying. Not fifty yards off were the woods, and they could not reach them without being discovered. It seemed to Everard as if they must be seen where they were, indeed, but the dirty drab into which the originally white hunting-shirts had faded rendered the two friends quite invisible, from its similarity in color to the grain.

Presently Tim Murphy took off his cap, and rose up on his hands and knees to peep out among the wheat-heads, motioning Everard to lie still. He remained in this posture for some minutes, and then sunk down again, with a look of satisfaction.

"They're pickin' out the trail," he whispered, "and not lookin' this way. Now's the time, liftant."

And he rose up and crept forward through the grain on hands and knees, leaving a plain trail behind him no doubt, but hidden from view by the tall spears of wheat, where the trails of wild animals, wandering at will, crossed it in every direction, a melancholy picture of neglect. Everard followed in the same fashion, each trailing two rifles behind him; and in this way they soon gained the shelter of the woods unseen, and were able to stand erect once more. It was not till they were buried in the wood, and out of sight of the open field, that Everard asked:

"Why is it, Tim, that you lay still so long before you crept away?"

"Sure and weren't the Injuns in full sight?" asked Tim, in return. "The first thing they'd do was to glower over the fields, and av a stalk of grain had looked askew, they'd 'a' been after us, like St. Patrick after the snakes. Now they'll have to trail us, and, bedad, Tim Murphy can move faster than they can trail, and we'll have a chance."

"But how shall we throw them off the trail?" asked Everard.

"Divil a fear of that," said Tim, confidently. "Afore Colonel Butler comes up, they'll have enough of trailing Double-Death. I'll go bail. How we're to find the cold haridan they call Queen Esther, and get the young lady away from her, that's the devil of a job. But come along, liftant. We're getting nearer the village every moment, and 'won't do to be talkin'. We'll need eyes and ears for twenty, so no more chat."

Everard saw the sense of this advice, and the two friends proceeded through the woods in dead silence, making the best use of eyes and ears that they could. Tim Murphy was one of those cool, reckless fellows, found nowhere in such perfection as among our American frontiersmen, who deliberately stake their lives against hundreds of hostile chances, and come off scot-free from the midst of perils, by the mere force of pluck and coolness, fertility of invention, and daring of execution. Everard had many of the same qualities, but he lacked the experience acquired by the other in many a bush-fight, and was content to follow him as a pup. He knew that they were going straight toward a village of hostile Indians, and that more were on their trail behind; and yet he followed without hesitation. Against equal numbers of foes they were well protected, the one having three, the other two rifle-shots to fire, without reloading; besides which, Everard had retained the holster-pistols from his saddle, which he had thrust into his belt at the moment of departure. But the foes they were to meet were hundreds in number, and likely to be keen and vigilant.

Nevertheless, they went forward steadily, the woods becoming deeper and darker as they proceeded, the ground gradually sinking lower, carpeted with dark-brown moss. The drought of the summer had changed the place from a swamp, and there were only little pools here and there, at long distances, where some deep hole had been made by the uprooting of a wind-struck tree; still there were plentiful evidences that it was nothing but a dried-up swamp, and Tim whispered to his companion to be cautious, for the Indian towns were generally at the edges of swamps. They advanced silently, treading in each other's steps with great precaution, Tim Murphy keeping a sharp look-out ahead, and to either side. The forest was unusually silent—a bad sign. Here and there, a long way off, they could hear the tap of the woodpecker on some dead tree, or the chatter of a squirrel, but near them all was silent. Presently Tim halted and listened intently. A low murmur could be heard in the woods directly ahead of them, where the ground rose up from the edge of the swamp.

"There's the village, beyant the hill," whispered Tim. As he spoke, he turned and struck off to the right, into the densest part of the swamp.

CHAPTER VIII.

QUEEN ESTHER.

At the door of an Indian wigwam, in the midst of a village of similar structures, a young girl was seated on a bear-skin, absently gazing on the antics of a number of little naked children, who were tumbling about in the dirt, quarreling with some rough wolf-looking curs for the possession of sundry half-devoured bones. Here and there at the doors of the lodges the squaws were sitting in the sunset, enjoying rest and gossip, while the warriors were all in a grand circle on a green in the center of the village, smoking solemnly, as if at a council.

The young girl was elaborately attired in all the finery of a chief's daughter, with short blue cloth skirt, worked in beads and porcupine-quills, her swelling bust half-revealed by the open hunting-shirt of doe-skin, while a blanket of more than common

fineness fell from her shoulders. But a glance at her face was sufficient to show that she was no Indian, but a white woman, and a very pretty one at that, a cheerful, healthy country girl, with clear, dark eyes, magnificent hair, and a form like a young panther for mingled grace and vigor.

It was, indeed, no other than Marian Neilson, who had been adopted by the Indian queen, according to a common custom of the tribes, to replace a daughter slain in the battle: for Queen Esther, like many of the Eastern Indians, had enforced "woman's rights" in a practical form a hundred years before they were agitated in civilized countries, and went to battle with her daughters at the head of her warriors.

Marian looked thoughtful and sad, but by no means downcast. There was a fund of quiet heroism in those women of the Revolution that kept them up under the most fearful trials to an extent we little think of nowadays. She had seen so many horrors during the sack of Wyoming, that her own fate, a mildly treated captive, appeared to be a very light one compared to the sufferings of many women more delicately reared than herself. She had seen a mother carrying her newly-born infant twenty miles on foot, the child itself a corpse, to obtain the poor privilege of burying the little creature, without being discovered.

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Nevertheless, they went forward steadily, the woods becoming deeper and darker as they proceeded, the ground gradually sinking lower, carpeted with dark-brown moss. The drought of the summer had changed the place from a swamp, and there were only little pools here and there, at long distances, where some deep hole had been made by the uprooting of a wind-struck tree; still there were plentiful evidences that it was nothing but a dried-up swamp, and Tim whispered to his companion to be cautious, for the Indian towns were generally at the edges of swamps. They advanced silently, treading in each other's steps with great precaution, Tim Murphy keeping a sharp look-out ahead, and to either side. The forest was unusually silent—a bad sign. Here and there, a long way off, they could hear the tap of the woodpecker on some dead tree, or the chatter of a squirrel, but near them all was silent. Presently Tim halted and listened intently. A low murmur could be heard in the woods directly ahead of them, where the ground rose up from the edge of the swamp.

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Nevertheless, they went forward steadily, the woods becoming deeper and darker as they proceeded, the ground gradually sinking lower, carpeted with dark-brown moss. The drought of the summer had changed the place from a swamp, and there were only little pools here and there, at long distances, where some deep hole had been made by the uprooting of a wind-struck tree; still there were plentiful evidences that it was nothing but a dried-up swamp, and Tim whispered to his companion to be cautious, for the Indian towns were generally at the edges of swamps. They advanced silently, treading in each other's steps with great precaution, Tim Murphy keeping a sharp look-out ahead, and to either side. The forest was unusually silent—a bad sign. Here and there, a long way off, they could hear the tap of the woodpecker on some dead tree, or the chatter of a squirrel, but near them all was silent. Presently Tim halted and listened intently. A low murmur could be heard in the woods directly ahead of them, where the ground rose up from the edge of the swamp.

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Only one thought, one intent, was uppermost in his excited mind, and that was, to escape from Percy Wolfe!

After the departure of his associate, Dorsey Derrick reassured his comfortable position in the chair, and vented an ill-tempered grunt.

"He's wild!" he exclaimed, as he ran his eyes again over the will; and, after a while, he went on, in a musing strain:

"Now, the question is: shall I let him know what this important document says? He's to get ten thousand dollars, eh? for carrying out Horace Rochesterine's instructions. If he marries Isabel Rochesterine, he'll get about two hundred and fifty thousand, in all—provided that the child, Pearl, doesn't put in an appearance. But he might take it into his head to act honest and be satisfied with ten? What's ten thousand dollars among—one much less two! And then I wouldn't get so much, either. I guess you'd better be kept in ignorance, friend Paine. You marry the widow, by all means. I'm partial to widows, I am!"

CHAPTER XII.

OFF ON THE MORROW.

ISABEL ROCHESTERINE was seated before the glowing fireplace, in the gorgeous parlor of her home—her attitude one of captivating grace, her appearance that of a lovely, almost unearthly being, absorbed in rapture, unconscious of all around her—the dart of Cupid pinning in her heart a mystic fire, and weaving heavens of delight within her waking dream.

One elbow rested on the arm of the rich chair; one hand—now stripped of its flashing jewels—pressed against her crimsoned cheek; and her eyes—those large, lustrous orbs of jet—gazed dreamily into the mass of coals.

She was attired in plain black, devoid of every ornament; yet even in this, when nothing but simplicity engaged the eye, there were new charms to be discovered by the betrayals of the close-falling dress, in the white neck that outlined so gracefully above the sable circle at the throat, in the pure arm, half-exposed by the "angel" sleeve, as it supported her beautiful head.

A strange calm pervaded the atmosphere of the house.

There was no blaze of light, such as had, heretofore, made Mrs. Rochesterine's house prominent in that locality during the winter; but a dim, uncertain glimmer here and there, or a somberly-flickering flame in the large kitchen, where the servants, even more susceptible to the gloom of the hour than she who was alone up-stairs, were grouped together and speaking only in an undertone.

Presently there was a dull rumble of carriage-wheels on the outside; a vehicle stopped before the house. Then came a quiet, impatient pull at the bell, awakening Isabel from her meditations.

"Why, who can that be?" she asked herself. "I am expecting no one to-night."

In a few moments, a servant entered.

"Mr. Paine, ma'm, is in the other parlor."

"Mr. Paine!—here? I thou—Admit him," quickly.

Claude Paine was ushered in.

"Claude! I thought you were in Baltimore with Pearl?"

"Isabel?" He had her in his arms ere she could say more, and was raining kisses on her yielding lips.

"I expected to be, Isabel; but, something has occurred to greatly embarrass me. At the depot I met a friend. It seems it was a providential meeting, too; for he had been looking for me here, in vain, and was just about to return to New York, despairing of being able to find me. I am called to Sacramento immediately!"

"Yes—rather strange that I must go so hastily to the very city you intended visiting, isn't it? If I could catch the very next train, it would be none too soon. I can hardly delay an hour. Several thousand dollars are involved—so much, in truth, that I could not afford to be the loser. We can go together."

"Pearl? What did you do with Pearl?" she asked, breaking in upon his rapid utterances.

"This friend of mine will take her to the Institution. They are long since on their way. He has time, and kindly volunteered the favor. As every thing was arranged for her reception beforehand, there will be no difficulty. Now, there is a train going at 6:45 A. M. to-morrow, connecting at the Relay House for the West—"

"Are you sure Pearl will have no trouble?" Isabel interrupted, again.

"Of course I am! Now, can you be ready to go with me on the early train, in the morning?"

"This is sudden, Claude. And the hour is so early! I will scarce have time to—"

"But consider, dearest, how delightful for us to be in each other's company on the trip. Can't you possibly arrange matters?"

"I might," hesitatingly, while she still lingered in the embrace of this man who controlled the very pulsations of her heart.

"Say that you will, Isabel! Even if you have to let one or more of the servants remain in charge of the house until you can come back?"

"That I shall never do, Claude. I hate this section, and shall never return to it."

He did not expect this. But his eyes glistened with a secret satisfaction when he heard it, and he shifted his position in order to conceal, in the movement, the effect her speech had on him.

"Then, discharge all the servants, pack your trunks, close the house—and I will come back at some time and sell the property for you. Decide, Isabel; for I have hardly a moment to spare—even for the blisses I find in your face, form, voice, and lips! My carriage is waiting for me at the door, and I must be off!"

"I will go, Claude. But I will have to make a good many sacrifices it will be so inconvenient."

"I will try and pay you for the sacrifices, by—"

"I know you will, dear Claude!" and, after a second, she added, inquiringly: "Do you remember there was a gentleman called to see me yesterday, after I ordered the house to be closed?"

"Yes." He looked at her keenly, as he answered:

"Well, he came again to-day."

"He did?" His teeth clinched, and his fingers worked; but she did not notice that his words had made him suddenly and newly nervous.

"He had a very singular object in calling: said Horace had left a will for Pearl's benefit—it had been intrusted to some party in America. Did you know any thing about it?"

"I? Why, no!" His exclamation of surprise was well affected; she failed to see how great an effort it cost him to smother the true feelings of his breast, and check the malediction upon Percy Wolfe, that was at his tongue's end.

"It is very singular," he said. "Have you heard of it before?"

"No."

"Assured, if there is such a will, it will appear soon."

"That is precisely what he said."

"Let us quietly await the issue of a prophecy, and meantime, think of other things."

"Oh, it will be all right. I fix him!" And then, though the carriage waited, though he had declared the short limit of time at his disposal, he lingered awhile with the woman who was worshiping him with a mad, wild love—whose soft lips would seem so full of sweets that, unless dead to the subtler passions which give to nature its soul, he could not live a moment away from them. "Here is the latch-key; you can let yourself in without the knowledge of the servants. Bring him in here; I will have every thing in readiness."

"Right away."

"Hers is the latch-key; you can let yourself in without the knowledge of the servants. Bring him in here; I will have every thing in readiness."

"Oh, it will be all right. I fix him!" And with this assurance the Jew departed.

Van Rensselaer looked around him with a smile of triumph.

"By heavens! the tide has turned!" he exclaimed. "At last the skies brighten. The will destroyed, my fortune is safe. Then by the aid of the Jew I will revive the old forgery charge, and send him, Keene, up the river to Sing Sing, where he will have plenty of time to meditate upon the folly of contending with me. I'll crush him without mercy!"

The servant again interrupted Van Rensselaer's meditations by ushering Mr. Lawrence into the room.

Mr. Lawrence was a slender young gentleman, dressed in the extreme of fashion; he rejoiced in short-cut, yellow hair and extensive whiskers of the same hue. There was something about his face which reminded one of a poodle-dog's head.

Mr. Lawrence was extremely embarrassed upon beholding Van Rensselaer. Of course he was not aware that the servant had been instructed to show him into the library on purpose to meet that gentleman.

"Ah, Lawrence, good-evening!" exclaimed David, grasping him cordially by the hand.

"How d'y' do?" stammered that worthy gentleman, in great confusion; "I expected to see Miss Clara here."

"She's up-stairs, Dolly, let me congratulate you on—" and Van Rensselaer again shook the limp hand of the poor heartily. "There isn't a man in New York that I would sooner give Clara to than that."

"Yes, of course!" Lawrence wished himself a thousand miles away, for the purpose of his visit was, if possible, to induce Clara to release him from his promise.

"I suppose you read those newspaper articles to-day?" Van Rensselaer said, carelessly.

"Yes, I read 'em—of course you know—"

and Lawrence came to a dead halt, when he suddenly remembered that the articles were any thing but complimentary to his future brother-in-law.

"I intend to sue them all for libel," David said, speaking of his action as a matter of course.

"Sue 'em for libel!" stammered Lawrence, in utter astonishment, open-mouthed with wonder. "Why, I thought that the reports were true!" Then, as he saw the cloud gather on Van Rensselaer's brow, he suddenly concluded that he had made a rather awkward mistake.

"No, I don't mean that," he stammered; "I mean that—of course I—you know—I—" and then he broke down, helplessly.

"Yes, I've instructed my lawyer to bring suits against all of them. These newspaper fellows get very insolent sometimes. I'm going to teach them a lesson. A libel suit costs money, you know. When they find that I am really in earnest, the chances are ten to one that they will be glad to retract."

"Yes, of course; I suppose that you know all about it, but it always seemed to me that fighting a newspaper was a great deal like fighting a nest of bumblebees; the longer you fight the more you get stung, and when you succeed in capturing one, and go to close your hand upon it, you find that it is there!"

This was quite a long speech for Lawrence to make, for ideas were never over and above plenty with him.

"I shall punish them for their insolence," Van Rensselaer said, sternly. "It is all well enough for them to print their lies about common people, but when they come to us of the avenue it is about time to put a stop to it."

"Yes, but it always seemed to me that they rather delighted in a jolly good row, and when a fellow defies them, it's like shaking a red flag in the face of an angry bull!"

"Not a bad simile, Lawrence," Van Rensselaer said, laughing. "But, I won't detain you any longer; you'll find Clara upstairs. She seems quite cut up about this unfortunate affair. If I were you, I should go and comfort her. I suppose, of course, that this affair will make no difference with your engagement to my sister?"

"Yes!" Van Rensselaer exclaimed, brightly.

"Revenge is sweet; you like revenge, eh?"

"How?"

"I go to Mister Keene; I say to him: mine friend will the will; you come mit me in a carriage to his house. I bring him right here into dis room. He carries the will here in his breast-pocket," and the Jew indicated the locality by placing his hand upon it. "I hold him, you take the will from him, put it in the gas-puff—lethe smoke—fire—the will is destroyed. You gives me five hundred dollars; you gives Royal Keene nothing, and you hate revenge, eh?"

Van Rensselaer had listened attentively.

"Yes, but there are some serious difficulties in the way," he said. "In the first place, he will require this house the moment he sees it, and even if you succeeded in getting him inside, he is not the man to allow himself to be robbed without a struggle, and a hard one, too."

"Oh, mine goat friend, you listen to me!" exclaimed the broker. "Dat poor young man is so trusk as never was. He is so intoxicated dat my heart bleeds for him."

"Drunk!"

"Yesh, if he wasn't so trunk I couldn't make five hundred dollars out of him!"

"His old vice!"

"Oh, he is one walking whisky-barrel!" the Jew cried, with both hands uplifted.

"You think then that you can easily bring him here without danger of his discovering whether he is being carried?"

"Yesh, mine goat friend; I ish sure of it!"

"I accept your offer then; bring him here, place the will in my possession, and I will give you five hundred dollars."

"Dat ish a bargain!" cried Abrams. "I knew that we could make a trade."

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"By the way," said Van Rensselaer, suddenly, "do you remember a certain note purporting to be drawn by me and indorsed by Royal Keene, that you sold me about three years ago?"

"Oh, yesh—I never forgets!"

"Would you be willing to go on the witness stand and tell all you know in regard to the affair?"

"I no tell lies for anybody," replied the Jew, promptly. "You call me into court, I tells all I knows."

"That is all I want. When will you bring Keene here?"

"Right away."

"Hers is the latch-key; you can let yourself in without the knowledge of the servants. Bring him in here; I will have every thing in readiness."

"Oh, it will be all right. I fix him!"

"Keene into the room, and tax all his efforts to keep that gentleman upon his legs, and to prevent him from disturbing the house with his drunken yells."

"Hie—where am I—you old scoundrel?"

Keene cried, boisterously, with a thickened utterance.

"Hush, my tear," said the Jew, soothingly.

"Where have you—hie—brought me to, anyway? Who's—hie—the proprietor of this ranch?"

"Don't make so much noise; you got de will, eh?"

"Course I have—hie—right here—in my breast-pocket!" Keene answered.

Then, with a sudden motion, Abrams slipped his arms under Keene's, forcing them behind his back and holding him in a vice-like grip.

"Now then, my tear!" the Jew cried, to Van Rensselaer.

Quick as a hawk, darting on its prey, Van Rensselaer sprang forward and tore the will from Keene's pocket; then he thrust it into the flame of the gas with a loud, triumphant laugh.

Keene was a moment glared around him in helpless astonishment; and then, as if suddenly realizing that he had been entrapped and the precious paper stolen from him, attempted to free himself, but the Jew held him with a grip of iron.

"Ah, Royal Keene, the will is mine!"

Van Rensselaer cried, as the paper crackled and blazed in the flame of the gas.

"Have I—hie—been betrayed?" Keene stammered, in drunken amazement.

"Yes, into my hands!" Van Rensselaer replied, in triumph. "See this precious paper—the will which was to rob me of half my fortune—the flame is reducing it to powder! There!" and he cast the burning fragment from him into the grate, "now it is ashes; all claim of Alice Van Rensselaer to my father's estate is gone. Even if he is living, and

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MAJOR MAX MARTINE.

In the coming issue we commence the promised series of papers, by this noted Guide of the Plains. That they will possess the deepest interest for all classes of readers will be apparent from a glance at the following chapter heads of the earlier installments of

MOHENESTO; or, Trap, Trigger and Tomahawk.

BY HENRY M. AVERY,

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CHAPTER I.

The author becomes a free-trapper. The frozen Indian. Novel method of drawing the frost. Little Bear's Trap. The methods of an Indian's life. Hot springs. A Poo-doo. In a bear-trap. The captive of the Sioux. The council, and their decision. My companion burned at the stake. Wanton son-in-law. Life among the Sioux. The author joins the tribe. Married in haste.

CHAPTER II.

On the war-path. The war-path secret. The enemy surprised. The prisoners and their fate. The "Old Crow" against the methods of an Indian's life. A vision of the stake. Trials of character. A surround. The hero of the hunt. The fall hunting. Escape from captivity. Recollections. If the young man, at the start, only will give a permanent no! to every solicitation to "take a drink," he will have no trouble whatever in the matter.

CHAPTER III.

Trapping on Wind River. Trapping beavers. "Signs." Food and habits of the beaver. Beaver dams. Society among the beavers. Superstitions of the trapper. The labor of trapping. Tricks of the beaver. Dress of the trapper. A strange visitor. His story.

CHAPTER IV.

Among the "dusky maidens." My new partner A "scrimmager" with the Blackfeet. Again taken prisoner. Reception in the Blackfoot village. The court of death. Running the gauntlet. The Pawnee Indians. Sioux. Discredit. Ready to shoot. Saved from death by Indian masonry. Interpreter for the Blackfeet. Free Masonry among the Blackfeet. A white captive. Indian agents.

CHAPTER V.

My horse and dog. Horse Jim and Indian Jim. A disappointment. Unwelcome company. A beehive. Some peddlers. Take him if you can. Jim as a hinnie. Carried by Cheyennes. A heavy wager. A game of cards for a life. Jim shows his horse-sense. Death of the Cheyenne chief. My dog, Beauty. The green-eyed monster. Breed of the critter. A proverb very true. Beauty on the trail. Among the Sioux. Fun for Memoriam.

CHAPTER VI.

First shot at an Indian. Bare Indians. Cold weather. Hunting time. A frozen nose. Hibernation. Comforting a mourner. Deer Hunting. Still Hunting. "Good Injun me." How it feels to be scalped. A scalp-dance. Cheyenne eloquence. An original tempestuous letter. A pint of whisky. The profits on a barrel of fire-water. Cause of Indian wars. Indian civil customs.

CHAPTER VII.

Guides across the mountains. The Cockney Englishman. Our reception among the Teton Sioux. Prairie dogs. Their villages and habits. The brawling owl. Where they live. Rattlesnakes. Antidote for the bite. Practice what you preach. John Bull on the west. Two tales to a story. To the Columbia and back. Small-pox among the Indians. Treatment of it. Leaving the Sioux. A dose of truth. Reason in all things.

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That these papers will be welcomed we can well understand. They certainly are among the most interesting and important contributions of the year to our popular literature.

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Our Arm-Chair.

A WORD to Young Men.—The increased consumption of liquor, in this country, means a decrease in the average of human life among us. The human body, at its best, can only sustain a given amount of excitement and wear. If, by the use of ardent spirits, the excitement of each day is intensified and the bodily energies are drained, it is as certain as the seasons that the body and mind so stimulated wear out rapidly in proportion to the amount of the abnormal tension on nerves,

secretory system and brain. That many liquor-drinkers sustain this drain for years is only a proof of their own hardness of constitution; no proof that liquor is harmless. On the contrary, the proof that liquor is very harmful, every drinker can attest, and the best observers are now agreed that, unless the use of spirits is abated, a serious deterioration in our national health, strength and longevity must ensue.

Some very curious experiments on this point are detailed by Dr. Richardson in a recent article published in the "Popular Science Monthly." We quote:

"By observation and experiment we learn that a healthy teetotaler averages 100,000 heart-beats in twenty-four hours, taking eight days together; commencing the ninth day by giving one fluid ounce of alcohol, the beats increased 340. On the tenth day two ounces gave an increase of 1872 beats. The eleventh day four ounces produced an addition of 12,960 beats; and so on up to the fourteenth day, when eight ounces increased the beats 25,458, being twenty-three per cent in excess of a healthy pulsation. The daily action of the heart without stimulus equalled the force required to lift 122 tons one foot from the ground. The last day of the experiments with eight ounces of alcohol the heart force was equal to 146 tons—an excess of 42 tons."

To excel one in the elegance of clothing, and the lavish display of finery, seems to be the end of some people's ambition, and for this they will work hard, and then think they should be praised when it is accomplished.

But these are selfish ambitions; they are merely to gratify themselves, and do not confer any good or benefit on others.

No, we are not all selfish in our desires.

Look at some of the young men in our colleges. Of course I mean those who are dependent on their own exertions to gain an education. Theirs is no flowery path to tread. Are they above work? Do they consider it beneath them to accomplish manual labor, because they are going along bravely in their studies, and are gaining high praises from their teachers?

To answer the question, let us look on some of these young men in their vacations. We do not find them idling away their time and wasting their precious hours. No; we will find some of them sawing at a woodpile, working just as proudly as their honest hands will let them. It is no dishonor to them; their teachers will not think less of them, and in the bright future, when we shall hear of them—for we shall hear of them, and in goodly terms, too—we shall not hold them any meaner in our estimation because we know their hands were made rough by honest toil. They have a noble ambition—an ambition to gain knowledge, so that they may impart it to others—and it is an ambition we all should

accorded by the softer sex. J. D. B.

DEATH OF A GOOD MAN.

WE are pained to announce the decease of one of our most estimable citizens—Mr. GEORGE DEXTER, so long and so favorably known in this country in connection with the News business, and so endeared to thousands of friends by his kindness of heart and integrity of character. Literally, a self-made man, he was the type of a true gentleman, neither proud of his eminent success nor passing by even the lowliest of men in his good words and deeds. When such a life goes out it leaves a sweet memory behind which ennobles human nature, and makes us realize that a life rightly spent is a precious heritage, both to the dead and the living.

The Bookseller's Guide thus advertises to its loss in death:

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SATURDAY JOURNAL

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BY THE LAKE.

BY GEORGE.

Well remembered the eve, unforgettably hours
That I lay on a bank by the lake.
Inhaling the fragrance that rose from the flowers
Which bloomed into petal and flake,
When suddenly turning, I first saw the face
With its stricken looks round her head,
And I felt from that hour you were mine, mine,
Oh, Grace! are you dead? are you dead?

Oft oft while the angels were lighting the stars
We have floated, soft, over the lake,
And our ears turned the stars into tremulous bars
As we left them disturbed in our wake;
And when all was still as death on the hill,
And the voices of singers had fled,
Then check pressed to cheek and lips touched
Are you dead, oh, Grace! are you dead?

No flower in the woods but knew well her face;
No bird but for her sang its charms,
And the pines sighed the softer, if, checking her pace,
She paused 'neath their shadowing arms.
And earth was the brighter for having her here,
A heaven were sinless that are sped,
And one heart I've of both happy and clear—
Are you dead, Grace! Grace! are you dead?

Lilian's Loss.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

The sun never shone brighter, the trees
were never greener, nor the birds more musical than that bright day in "leafy June," which saw a merry party rambling over the hills and hollows of Duck Island.

And there was not a sweeter face or a brighter eye in that gay garden of girls than those of Lilian Fay, as she stood with her costly robes fluttering about her, the center of a little group of animated talkers.

"Oh, I would rather be dead than poor!" she cried, her brown eyes sparkling. "If ever papas loses his money, I shall just want to die."

"But, Lil, there are worse things than being poor," said one young lady.

"No, no, there is nothing worse," persisted Lil, "than to have to work hard, and wear shabby old clothes, and not have a thing when you wanted it—oh, no, there can't be any thing any worse than that."

"You won't marry a poor man," laughed one of her young friends.

"Not I—not unless I were certain of enough for both of us. 'Love in a cottage' wouldn't attract me, unless there was plenty of money, too. But, come, at this rate we shall never explore Duck Island, so here we go!"

And the merry group began to scatter in different directions over the verdant island. One young man remained motionless, with folded arms and stern mouth, leaning against a huge tree.

Lily Fay's careless words had fallen like ice upon his heart, for he loved Lily Fay—and he was poor.

Spoke of that he had cherished a wild hope that some day he might win and wear this peerless Lily—but wild and vain he knew it now to be, for had she not declared she would not marry a poor man?

With a low sigh and a bitter smile, Lawrence Gray sternly shut his heart against Lily Fay's sweet image, and sought to banish it forever.

And Lil? Did she miss him? She was proud, this willful Lily of mine—she could not "wear her heart upon her sleeve," where all the world might see. If it ached, she kept still and gave no sign of it—she tripped along her smooth path as gayly as if pain and poverty were the creatures of another world.

By and by Lawrence Gray spoke a quiet good-by to Lily Fay, and went away to a distant city, to join the vast army who struggle for wealth and fame.

But wealth and fame are hard to win, and for years fortune pressed him hard in the field. He would not yield to her, so at last the fickle goddess changed her mind and yielded to him.

A bright, new sign over a handsome building bore in large gilt letters the names of Gray and Gilmore, and after a season of steady prosperity Lawrence Gray began to feel that he was laying a firm basis for fortune.

It is quite true, and quite sad, also, that in the busy race for fortune men often lose sight, in a great degree, of old home ties.

Lawrence Gray did not hear often from his native place, and scarcely knew what changes time had worked there.

But he often thought of Lily Fay, and some day, when he grew a little richer, he meant to return home, find Lily, and ask her to share his happiness.

He knew her well enough to be sure that she was not so sensitive as her careless words made her appear.

"No, she was worth a good man's loving," said he, "and if misfortune ever comes to her, I know she will face it with a brave and not a coward heart."

It chanced at last that one of the salesmen in Gray and Gilmore's got married, as women sometimes will, and left a vacant place. There were immediate applications for it—alas! in a great city there are many more applicants than places for them to fill—but none, as yet, quite came up to the necessary requirements.

One morning Lawrence Gray sat alone in his office, when a clerk came to say that another lady had called to see about the vacant position.

Lawrence requested the clerk to conduct her to him, and rose respectfully, as the lady, dressed in deep black, came into the office.

"Good-morning, madam," said he.

With a quick exclamation of surprise the lady threw up her veil, and looked full at him.

"Lawrence!"

"Lily!" The words fell simultaneously from their lips, and then for a moment they both stood speechless.

Lawrence was first to recover himself.

"Miss Fay!" he cried, extending one hand in welcome, and offering her a chair with the other, "this is an unexpected pleasure, I assure you! The young man thought you called for the vacant position in the store."

"I did," said Lily, in a low, firm voice.

"But how—I mean, why—Miss Fay, I really do not understand," said Lawrence.

"It is the old story," said poor Lily, firmly, and with dignity, though her cheek was crimson. "I lost my dear father and all my money—I deserved it—you know how proud I was—and I came here six months ago to find work."

"And have not found it?" asked he, commanding his voice with difficulty.

"Not yet—unless—oh, Mr. Gray, do you think I can fill the place vacant here?"

"Do you think you would like to be a saleswoman in a store?"

"I don't know—I must not stop for what I like, now—it is a question of necessity," said Lily, making a strong effort for firmness.

"Well, Miss Lilian, I don't think the position here would suit you at all—but I know of one in another establishment which I am certain I can procure for you, if you will take it."

"Oh, I will take any thing I can do," cried Lil.

"Very well—the duties of the place, though very important, will not be heavy."

"But—if it is a responsible position, perhaps I shall not suit," said Lily, doubtfully.

"It is quite responsible, but I am certain you will suit. Miss Lily, if you will tell me where I may call for you, I will bring my buggy and take you to see the place this afternoon, and you may consider yourself engaged already."

With many thanks, Lily gave him the address of the humble home in Cherry street, where she lodged, and then left him, eager to shut herself in her own little chamber and think of the strange chances of the morning.

About four o'clock Lawrence Gray handed Lily to a seat in his handsome buggy, and drove to a pleasant street, where he stopped before the door of a somewhat elegant residence.

"This is the place," said he.

"But this is a private house," said Lil.

"Yes—that is one reason I thought you would prefer the place," said he, smiling.

He led her up the steps, opened the door without ringing, and showed her into a handsome parlor.

Lily gave him a look of surprise, which he answered immediately:

"Yes, I am very much at home, you see; in fact, Lily, dearest girl, this is my home and I want to make it yours. The place I offer you is that of my own, darling, cherished wife. Oh, Lily, will you take it?"

Poor Lily was so utterly overcome that she covered her face with her hands, and dropped back in the soft chair where he had placed her, without a word.

And Lawrence knelt beside her, taking the little hands in his, while in a few swift, loving words, he told her the whole story of his heart, beginning with the love of years ago.

And as poor Lily listened, her whole heart went out in yearning tenderness to such generous love.

Poor little wanderer! The world had used her ill and made her weary. Here were rest, home and love offered to her—do you wonder that she accepted them?

She did accept, and as Lawrence could see no reason for an hour's delay, they had a quiet little wedding in church that day, and Lily entered upon the duties of her new position at once.

And so Lily's loss became her great gain, for it gave to her earth's best blessing, a happy, happy home.

THE Winged Messenger: OR, RISKING ALL FOR A HEART.

BY MARY REED CROWELL,
AUTHOR OF "THE EBON MASK," "OATH-BOUND,"
"LOVE-BLIND," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET.

The brilliant winter afternoon was drawing near its sunsetting. All day the sun had shone brightly on the white, freshly-fallen snow that lay in sloping piles in the streets, and now, as the flaming and ruby tints of the coming eve lent their rich glow, all the landscape seemed glorified as by a divinely fair presence.

It seemed a time, a place, for sweet, restful thoughts; for innocent joyousness, and merry gayety; the occasional peals of girlish laughter, or the shouts of deeper voices, told, all along the pretty village streets, that merriment reigned somewhere, if not in all places.

And yet, while all Beechcrest was happy and gay, the fairest of them all, the belle of the little village, whom the girls all envied, while they could not but love, and the sterner sex admired where they dared not adore, was walking the floor of her room, with flashing eyes and haughty, compressed lips; her proud little head thrown back in毫不的 contempt, her white fingers restlessly lacing themselves in and out.

Then, suddenly pausing by a little writing-desk, she drew from a drawer a paper and pen, and rapidly wrote a line or so.

"Arch, dearest, please tell me what I must do. He has been here not ten minutes ago, and when I refused to see him, my mother bade me remain in my room, a prisoner, till I should consent to tell him I would marry him. Arch, what shall I do? You know I hate Ellis Dorrance even more than I fear him; you know I shall be false to you."

"I send this by Lil, our white-winged messenger, as usual, Arch, I await your advice," said she.

FLORENCE.

Then, inclosing the note in an envelope, and tying a ribbon securely, with many a tender caress she fastened it around the neck of a sweet-eyed bird, a snowy carrier dove, pure as Florence's own girlish heart.

"Now, my Lil, straight to him who awaits you!"

Then raising the sash, she allowed the bird to go, on swift, graceful wings, homeward bound.

But the spark had not left her eyes, nor the flush her cheeks, when she resumed her walk to and fro.

"To be treated so! to be compelled—no, attempted to be coerced—in these days, into a marriage so distasteful as this proposed one! Mary Ellis Dorrance? Never, though I die in this room, a starved prisoner! Arch Chessom has my heart, and I feel he will find some way for me to escape."

She seated herself in a pretty little chair, cushioned with some dainty material that well set off her clear, dark complexion and large, dark eyes.

Florence Arbutnott was called a pretty girl; and certainly she looked very beautiful that afternoon in her elegantly simple house-dress of dark-green poplin, fitting so perfectly her graceful figure, and trailing off in stylish folds around her.

Her hair was very soft, and of a dark, bright brown, with a wave running through it; and her expert fingers could arrange it in a variety of styles that drove the other girls to envious desperation.

To-day she had curled it, and then drawn it back and fastened it with a large pearl

and gold comb, allowing little tendrils of curls to escape wherever they chose.

A half-hour passed; then came a quick step along the hall, and then an authoritative knock on the door brought back the scarlet bloom that was fading from her face as she sat there, in the now gathering twilight, thinking of Mr. Chessom.

"It is I, Florence. I am coming in."

It was Mrs. Arbutnott's voice.

"Very well. Only I see no need of announcing the fact, seeing as the door was locked on the outside."

There was a quiet scowl in her tones as the lady relocked the door on the inside, and then sat down in a dusky corner by the fire.

"I don't like to do this, Florence; I think you can dislike it no more than your father and I do. Only, Florence, so long as it is decided you are to marry Mr. Dorrance, and she is obstinate—"

"I am obstinate, and I never will marry him! Why do you insist on what I declare is an impossibility?"

She burst impetuously forth, growing angry at the calm smile on the lady's face.

"Because I have heard young ladies talk so before, Florence, and have seen them marry their especial aversions after all, just as I intend you shall."

There was a horrible strength in the mild assertion that chilled the girl's heart, though she was not alarmed.

"Yes," went on Mrs. Arbutnott, "I have arranged with Mr. Dorrance for the wedding."

Florence sprung from her chair, her whole body quivering in excitement and indignation.

"Mother! if, indeed, you are—are you my mother?"

She asked the question suddenly, almost as she gazed through the gloom on the lady's face.

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"I don't like to do this, Florence; I think you can dislike it no more than your father and I do. Only, Florence, so long as it is decided you are to marry Mr. Dorrance, and she is obstinate—"

"I am obstinate, and I never will marry him! Why do you insist on what I declare is an impossibility?"

She burst impetuously forth, growing angry at the calm smile on the lady's face.

"Because I have heard young ladies talk so before, Florence, and have seen them marry their especial aversions after all, just as I intend you shall."

There was a horrible strength in the mild assertion that chilled the girl's heart, though she was not alarmed.

"I don't like to do this, Florence; I think you can dislike it no more than

billet, then lifted the cage inside, where the air was genial and the last rays of the delicious sun slanted athwart it.

As he read, his cheeks grew flushed; and he compressed his lips tightly, as if to hold back some bitterly sharp words that had leaped to his tongue's end.

Then, hastily drawing paper and pencil to his side, he dashed off an answer.

"My own darling, I am glad you have told me. I can help you; I will help you; and this is what you must do: Make whatever preparations you need, and leave your home in the night, and go to the nearest town, and there thwart us and make you doubly unhappy. I will be at the corner of Prince and Church streets with the carriage, any hour you may name to-morrow! we will go direct to Dr. Baldwin's, your own pastor, be married and return to your house at Chessom's Pride. Remember, my conscientious little darling, I am proposing no runaway match; I only am going to place you beyond the power of Ellis Dorrance's annoyance. You will consent, my dearest Florence? and send our faithful Lili back at once with arrangements. Of course it cannot be to-night, as it is now nearly five o'clock, and Lili takes an hour or more for her return to Beechwood, by the hand of Esau, who will carry this note and the bird to you. Be courageous, my darling, and trust me ever to be your own."

"My own darling, I am glad you have told me. I can help you; I will help you; and this is what you must do: Make whatever preparations you need, and leave your home in the night, and go to the nearest town, and there thwart us and make you doubly unhappy. I will be at the corner of Prince and Church streets with the carriage, any hour you may name to-morrow! we will go direct to Dr. Baldwin's, your own pastor, be married and return to your house at Chessom's Pride. Remember, my conscientious little darling, I am proposing no runaway match; I only am going to place you beyond the power of Ellis Dorrance's annoyance. You will consent, my dearest Florence? and send our faithful Lili back at once with arrangements. Of course it cannot be to-night, as it is now nearly five o'clock, and Lili takes an hour or more for her return to Beechwood, by the hand of Esau, who will carry this note and the bird to you. Be courageous, my darling, and trust me ever to be your own."

Then he rung the bell, and delivered the sealed note and Lili, the faithful Cupid's messenger, whom Mr. Chessom had trained purposely to convey letters from Florence to himself, knowing the hopelessness of urging his suit personally at the Arbutnott's house, and fearing lest the wickedness of Ellis Dorrance would waylay letters sent by ordinary methods of transmittal.

Thus was the beautiful carrier-dove employed, the emblem of peace and happiness, but used, alas, in these sad days, when over the water, fond hearts wait with hope deferred for the coming of the little winged messenger; dreading to learn the message under its wing, fearful lest some loved one has written for the last time; while, high up on seats of national power, the great ones of earth resort to the trusty feathered servant to convey important news to and from the doomed city, once the gayest of the gay—now, ah, pitifully shorn of gaieties, and with a million deaths knocking at its gates! And within, while the carrier-dove soars aloft in the pure, free air, bearing its precious burden, there crouch the mother and the daughter, the children and the babes, weeping and fearing, wondering why the brightness has gone out from earth, the light from the sun.

And yet, in all unhappy Paris, hemmed in by pitiless besiegers, there was no truer a prisoner than Florence Arbutnott, in her own house, under her own roof, that winter's night. And to none of France's daughters did ever carrier-dove bring more welcome news than that to her, after the darkness had set in; when trusty Esau, cautiously tapping the window from the little balcony he was accustomed to use, handed her the precious letter and white-winged Lili.

CHAPTER III. SHOW HIM OUT!

WHEN Florence Arbutnott had left Mr. Ellis Dorrance standing so uncomrromisingly in the parlor, after her positive refusal of him and his offers, the girl's parents had entered, having heard every word that passed, from an adjoining room.

It needed but a glance from either party to reveal the angry vexation that existed on both sides.

"She's the most obstinately imprudent girl I ever saw in all my life. She doesn't care that for your authority or my threats," Dorrance snapped his fingers lightly.

"But she must be made to care, Dorrance. I tell you you shall have her, in spite of the very Evil One himself."

A black frown was gathering on Mr. Arbutnott's brows, and his wife sought to avert the coming storm.

"Girls are all alike; she will consent soon, I am confident. You must be patient, Mr. Dorrance."

"Patient! did you hear her unqualified refusal of me? and then tell me to be patient! I'd rather have a chance at young Chessom; it's he that's causing all this trouble."

"What need you care for young Chessom, I'd like to know? Don't I say you shall have her?"

"And don't I say you've nothing to say about it?"

The two men were fast verging on to a quarrel, when Mrs. Arbutnott's soft, smooth voice came in:

"There is no use talking this way. If we are ourselves divided, how can we expect to accomplish our long-anticipated ends? Mr. Dorrance, you know as well as I the reason why Florence must marry you; the secret is yours as well as ours."

A hoarse laugh escaped Dorrance's lips.

"And if the young lady does not suspect part of the mystery, at least, I'm no judge."

A cold, gray shade gathered on Mrs. Arbutnott's face, and she averted her face from her husband's, darting an appealing glance to Dorrance, that only brought a sneer to his lips.

"Suspect! she suspect? By heavens, how should she? Woman, does she know a syllable through your intervention?"

Mr. Arbutnott grasped his wife's arm roughly, and glared fiercely down in her terrified face.

"No, no!" she gasped. "I have never dared to say a word; and when she told me her convictions, I laughed at her and did the very best I could to disarm her suspicions."

Her husband never let go his hold while she thus hurriedly explained.

"Then she has spoken? What did she say? Tell me truly, and remember the sword so long suspended may drop very soon, if there is treachery between you and I."

"It was but a word; she declared I never had seemed like her mother, and she believed we were not her parents."

A fierce, almost insane wrath gathered in Mr. Arbutnott's eyes; then he tightened his hold of his wife's arm.

"It will be ill with you if she does not change her mind! Mark that!"

Then striding away, he paced to and fro in restless agitation.

"I suppose I may as well go, as I always go, unsuccessful, and no nearer any results than when I began. By Jove, if it wasn't for the way I love her, and the way I hate those Chessoms, I'd give it up."

Dorrance threw himself moodily back in the chair, an ugly frown contracting his forehead.

But Mrs. Arbutnott turned upon him like a tigress.

"Don't you give it up! Just go on, say a month longer, and I swear to you she shall be your wife."

A reddish luminous light glowed in her eyes, and her husband glanced approvingly toward her.

"A month, is it? that is, granting she does not elope with young Chessom."

"She'll not do that. She can not leave her room."

Dorrance listened, then took up his hat.

"Dye know where I am going?" As straight to Chessom's Pride as I can go."

"And tell young Archer for me that if he dare as much as look at Florence again, he'll rue the day."

Ellis Dorrance went out, and called a carriage to take him to Chessom's Pride.

It was just after Arch had dispatched the carrier dove and letter to Florence that Mr. Dorrance's card was handed to him by the footman.

A hot flame rushed to his face as he read, then he grew calm and cold as he walked to the little reception-room to see this man whom he owed so much dislike.

He had met him frequently before, so they were no strangers, although it was the first occasion of Dorrance's visit at Chessom's Pride.

Archie bowed slightly, and Dorrance rose to his feet as the host entered.

"Mr. Dorrance, I believe."

"Yes, I wish to have a short conversation with you, sir, if convenient."

It was plainly evident that it would not require many words from either to burst into flames the smoldering fire of mutual dislike between them; and while Dorrance was wondering how to begin to speak, Chessom was calculating whether his strength was equivalent to the task of colonizing the man and kicking him down the steps.

"Perhaps you are not aware that the object of my call is of a delicate nature; so much so, in fact, that I feel almost at a loss to tell you what I wish you to understand."

It might have been that he was warming with his subjects or the sight of Arch Chessom's haughty, repellent face vexed him; but certain it is that Dorrance's voice took on a different tone as he finished his sentence.

Mr. Chessom's lips parted in a derisive smile.

"Pray inform me, sir, on this important subject. My time is limited, and I beg you will be as explicit as possible."

The wrathful light rose to Dorrance's eyes that had chilled Florence Arbutnott's heart.

"Then, in as few words as possible, since I desire to leave your presence quite as adventitiously as you wish me to do, I will ask you if you are aware that the attentions you are paying Miss Florence Arbutnott are extremelyentious to that young lady's parents, as well as to myself?"

If he had expected to work upon Arch Chessom's passions, he was mistaken, for there was not a quiver of the nostril, or a wink of the eye, to indicate the insult he had pointed.

"To you, sir? And may I ask who or what you are to interfere between any lady and myself?"

His cool, scornful tone told upon the exactable Dorrance.

"I will tell you who and what I am. I am Florence Arbutnott's future husband, in spite of you, and I demand that you cease your attentions to her; both on my authority and her father's I say it!"

He had arisen from his chair in the heat of his wrath, and Chessom slowly rose, too, with an elaborate bow.

"Since you are to be the fortunate man, why come here and play this childish farce? John, show Mr. Dorrance the door, and do not bring me his card again."

He held open the door, with graceful, ironical courtesy, to permit Dorrance to pass through.

Just at that moment Esau passed in the hall, and not observing the presence of a guest, doffed his hat.

"I delivered the letter and the bird, sir, and Miss Florence said—"

"That is all right, Esau. Mr. Dorrance, good-evening."

He walked out of the library, leaving Ellis alone with the polite footman; the chance words of Esau ringing over and over in his astonished ears as he took his departure.

"A bird, and a letter! what could that letter contain that made it necessary that the Chessom carrier-dove, a well-known to curiosity in the village, should be sent to Florence Arbutnott to convey an answer?"

Turning the corner of the yard at the same rapid rate, he ran plump against a boy who had just emerged from the gates—a little fellow in a velvetine suit, with a scarlet cap set jauntily on his curly hair—fairly knocking him from his feet.

"See here, my jolly old cove," cried the boy, in choice American vernacular and a clear treble, as he gathered himself quickly from his horizontal position on the sidewalk, "mind your p's and your q's, or you'll discover a fine one in the trespass act that'll more than balance your beer-money. Oh, Lord bless me!"

Simpson's hand descended to the shoulder of the seeming lad, turning his face square about, and the latter saw for the first time who it was had stumbled against him.

The slight, lithe figure twisted itself from beneath the man's clutch and darted away; while the other, staring after, required some seconds to get it fairly through his brain that this was really the runaway ward of his master whom he had so closely encountered.

He mastered the idea in less than a minute, and started in hot pursuit.

Justine, glancing over her shoulder, saw him upon her track, and sped on through the quiet streets toward the close-built blocks in the center of the town. Her scarlet cap blew off, and Simpson, following with his eyes fixed on the flying figure, had thought enough to stoop and catch it as he was bold enough. The law denounced ye as vagrants, and the people had no pity on ye. Ye were ill-conditioned as famished mongrels—but there was worse yet in store for ye.

"Do you remember, then, when ye fared badly on yer tramps, when the people shunned ye as a pest in the neighborhoods where ye chanced to be, or hunted ye down like beasts o' prey? Ye mightn't have deserved it, mayhap, but to be a Gipsy was to carry the brand of thief and liar in yer very face, and to have it thrown at ye by them that were bold enough. The law denounced ye as vagrants, and the people had no pity on ye. Ye were ill-conditioned as famished mongrels—but there was worse yet in store for ye."

In the foreground Justine could see the figure of old Naome drawn up to its full height, and hear her harsh, cracked voice raised in angry acclamation. She drew silently near, wondering at the unusual spectacle.

"Go if ye will," Naome was saying. "But if yer desertion of us now brings harm to the lad there, or if our vengeance eludes us for the lack o' strong arms and faithful hearts, may the curse of the fatherless be on ye."

In the background Justine could see the figure of old Naome drawn up to its full height, and hear her harsh, cracked voice raised in angry acclamation. She drew silently near, wondering at the unusual spectacle.

"Ye say truly that I'm not one of yer kind, but did not I leave my world for yours? Do ye remember when yer captain before Wat Lyon there, and who was his brother, wedded outside of his tribe, and ye were proud o' the dainty little wife he'd won? She was my own girl, ye know; my only child, dearer to me than my own heart's blood. But it wasn't then, when ye loaded her with favors, and she was happy as a queen with her Gipsy husband, that I came to ye."

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"Ye will think I am with the band, and will follow it, perhaps, while we can take up our abode in the little hut in the Granville wood, where I first met you. They will never think of searching for me so near the Terrace."

Naome was far from satisfied, but for the present she could fix upon no better plan.

Long before day the entire camp was astir; with the first peep of light the horses were brought out and the wagons drawn into line. The erratic tribe needed little time for preparation, and never content to remain long in a place, were eager to be on the move again.

Art Lyon attended the little company as the lumbering wagons creaked away over the forest road; and Naome and Justine began their preparations for an immediate removal to the little woodland hut.

The latter had resumed her own dress, modified to resemble the garb of the young Gipsy girls. The scarlet skirt was tucked up, leaving her little feet exposed, and she wore a water-proof cloak with a hood that could be drawn forward to completely shade her face. Her clear, dark complexion had been stained a swarthy brown, with a decoction of walnut bark, and her hair, worn short, was cut closer still, in a vain attempt to disguise its natural inclination to curl.

They completed their simple preparations, and waited Art's return to begin their line of march to Granville wood, ten miles distant.

They saw him coming soon in a stealthy, hurried way.

"There's no time to be lost," he said, excitedly, as he came up. "Men are beating about the woods in search of the young lady, I know. She must start alone, Mother Naome; and ye and I will stay behind to send them on a wrong trail. Ye'll not be afraid but I'll get there safely."

"Go then, quick as ye can, and we'll follow ye soon."

Justine needed no second bidding, but sped like a deer away through the forest paths.

Art had obtained but an imperfect view of the two men he had seen pushing their way cautiously through the wood; or he would never have exposed her alone to the menacing danger.

Simpson had lost no time after his interview with Mr. Granville, but had gone directly to the stables, saddled one of the fleetest horses, and started for Wertz. It was near midnight when he reached the mysterious house. He rested there a few hours, but before day the two men were on their road to Centerton accompanied by the ferocious hounds.

They stabled their horses in the outskirts of the town, and then started for the wood. Wertz took the scarlet cap which Simpson had secured during the chase on the previous day, thus giving the hound the scent they wished him to pursue. The brute was not muzzled, but was secured by a long, strong leather thong to Wertz's wrist. He ran before, pointing his nose to the ground, but necessarily confined to the same pace as his master; it was some time before he struck upon the path which Justine had traversed on the previous day.

With a deep bay he sprang forward, and it required all his master's persuasions to restrain him to a speed consistent with his own movements.

This was the story—up to his loss of her—which Simpson had to relate when he met Mr. Granville at the foot of the terrace steps on his return in the late evening.

The latter heard him in silence.

"So you lost her," he commented, when the man paused in his recital, an oily blandness in his voice, which was more portentous than an outburst of passion from another man. "My faithful fellow, this is the second unfortunate blunder you have made; the first being when you proved an expert marksman but a careless observer. I fear if third mistake occurs it may be followed by unpleasant consequences."

"It weren't my fault," muttered the man, resentfully. "But that's not all of it yet."

"When I found it she'd given me the slip, I went back to the jail and made inquiry of the warden, in hopes he might be able to tell me something. He remembered seeing such a boy hanging about the place off and on for two or three days past, but being civil and not meddlesome, they

Art had not seen the dog when he discovered the men, but now as he heard the cry, he knew how impossible it would be to throw her pursuers from Justine's track with such unerring instincts to guide them.

He caught up his gun and ran in the direction from which the sound had come. Scarcely a moment until they were in full sight, the hound held in leash at the head.

Art raised his gun and taking quick aim, fired. But Wert had seen the movement, and simultaneously slipping the thong and giving the hound the word, it swerved aside, thus missing the shot, and dashed forward at full speed past the young Gipsy, who struck at him with his gun, but without effect.

Justine, too, heard the faint echo of that first blood-chilling cry. She darted forward at increased speed, with the instinct of self-preservation, changing her course now from the wood to the open country.

Again and again that terrible cry sounded, growing nearer with each repetition. Justine felt her heart sink like a dead, hard lump, and though she was straining every nerve for yet sake than from fear ye'd ever betray me."

He led her back through the long passage into the room at its end. He pushed her not unkindly into one of the heavy chairs, tying her fast with strong cords. He left her hands in front of her, but secured her wrists firmly together in a manner which rendered it impossible for her to reach the knots in the cord. Then he threw off the muffler, which was almost stifling her, and bound a thick handkerchief quickly over her eyes.

"I'll have to gag ye," he said, pausing in his talk. "But tell me first, where are the keys?"

He had to repeat the question before he could elicit a reply from the woman, half-fainting from terror.

"In the little cupboard in the wall beside the fire-place," she told him at last, and as a moment heard them jingle in his hand as he approached her again.

"Now, open yer mouth," he said, and as she obeyed inserted the gag. "So! I'd rather not do this, but it may save you from worse."

Then, satisfied that she was quite helpless in her bonds, he left her, taking his way directly to the Dark Room, which Justine had lately occupied. Her effects had been removed from it, and Art Lyon, looking about him, could see no trace of her recent presence there.

He knew the location of the room he sought, and lost no time in attempting to reach it. First, he tried the door behind the velvet curtain, but it was secured yet by the bar on the inner side. Then he retraced his steps through the empty anteroom and found the corridor. The keys opened the way for him until he stood in the little anteroom before the door which the hound had guarded.

But here he discovered that the key belonging to it was not upon the ring with the rest. He was not dismayed, for he had that collection of keys in his pocket which he had once used effectually at The Terrace, brought that he might be at no loss should he fail in securing the proper ones.

One of these accomplished the end desired, and the last door opened before him.

He saw a large room, with padded walls and a thick, soft carpet on the floor. It was furnished comfortably, almost luxuriously; but here, as in the apartment Justine had occupied, the prevailing color was black. There was a table with some well-worn books upon it, and reclining in a chair by its side was a man, whom Art started at once.

Art would have started after them, but old Naome threw herself in his way, holding him back with the firm clutch of her skinny hands while she compelled him to listen to her.

"Stay where ye are, lad! Ye can do the girl no good now. They'll not dare harm her, and yer single arm can't save her from being taken ag'in. Ye should think for yourself now and give back blow for blow. Isn't that hot head o' yours cool enough after ye've been bled that free, to see when ye've got a clear chance ahead; or must old Naome point it out to ye?"

"I know if ye'd let me go, I'd have blown out the brains o' both them villains, but she should escape them. Let me go, grand'am, or I shan't answer for it if I hurt even ye now."

He endeavored to detach the wrinkled old hands that clutched him with a grip which would not be shaken off.

"Lad, lad! take heed to yourself. The lass is another man's wife, mind ye be not ye made enough to think o' her in any other light."

The Gipsy hesitated, with a moody cloud settling down upon his dark face.

"Ay, true," he muttered, bitterly. "Were she free, even, the despised Gipsy would be no mate for her; but I'd give my life, mother Naome, if doing it would bring her joy."

"Poor lad," said the old woman, softly, loosing her hold upon him, now that she knew he was in a mood to listen to her words. "It's well youth is fickle; a bright face'll drive hers out o' yer mind, Art. Do ye forget her now for the time, or think to help her by heeding me?"

"What would ye have?"

"Ye heard the girl's tale after ye brought her away from that house. Ye know but for her wish to free Gerald Fonteney she'd never have waited this long without seeking into the mystery that place holds. It's for ye to do that now. If ye find Arthur Clare there, ye find the straight road to revenge on our enemy. I've sought for him, far and wide, for years, but the girl's tale clears the way. Lose no time, lad. Ye'll know where to find a horse that's fleet as the wind, and get ye there while the man and the dog are off on another scent. Do ye see, lad? don't loiter now."

"Ay, ye're sharper than I, mother Naome. I'd never have thought o' that."

Mrs. Wert had been left alone in the house, with the mystery shut in that distant room, which had been guarded night and day for ten years past. In all that time she had never once seen the tenant whom she knew the room contained. All she knew was that for the faithful guarding of this secret Mr. Granville had fitted the house in its present secure state, and placed her husband there, giving the latter free permission to exercise his calling to any extent he chose and the limits would permit.

Wert had served for the greater part of his life in one capacity or another in asylums for the insane; and the house to which Justine had been conveyed was neither more nor less than a private mad-house. It chanced that no patients were there during her stay, and so she had never guessed the secret of the secure appointments which had puzzled her more than once.

The poor, pale, timid little woman, whom Wert had married, dragged out an agonized existence amid the horrors of the place. She had never been able to overcome her fear of and aversion to the wretched beings brought there; and with gibbering idiots and screaming maniacs for her constant companions, it was little wonder she had faded into a gray specter of a woman who started at the slightest sound, and trembled before the husband who took delight in torturing her through the medium of her terror.

It was nearing noon when there came a loud knocking at the heavy-barred entrance-door. Mrs. Wert hastened to open it, sup-

posing that her husband had already returned. But the fastenings were no sooner undone and the door thrown back, than a muffler was flung quickly over her head, and she found herself seized in the grip of strong hands.

"Don't be afraid, mistress," said a man's voice in her ear. "If I'm rough with ye, it's more for yer sake than from fear ye'd ever betray me."

He led her back through the long passage into the room at its end. He pushed her not unkindly into one of the heavy chairs, tying her fast with strong cords. He left her hands in front of her, but secured her wrists firmly together in a manner which rendered it impossible for her to reach the knots in the cord.

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CHAPTER XIX.

INTRODUCES MISS GARDINER TO NOTICE.

MISS ALETHEA GARDINER sat in her breakfast-parlor, toying over the service on the little oval table, where hers was the only plate. Fragrant Mocha steamed in the solid silver urn, and grew cold in her cup of Sevres china; a plump partridge, roasted brown, held up its trussed wings and sent out a savory odor, vainly tempting the appetite. Miss Gardiner only sipped a little cold water from a gold-lined goblet, and crumbled a bit of toast without even tasting it.

The tasty little breakfast-parlor had long French windows, opening into a narrow yard where evergreens were trimmed in artistic shape, and holly vines twined in a thick network of bare branches over whitewashed trellises. Every thing was on a diminutive scale. The house was a cottage, built of white stone, with an elaborate little portico over the front entrance-door.

Miss Gardiner lingered at the table, spread with finest damask, with its costly service, glancing through the window occasionally with no interest in the familiar view and yawning slightly over the paper, which was a day old when it reached her. She was always bored in the country at this season. She had been accustomed to spending her winters in the household of a city relative, who was only too glad to extend her a cordial invitation; but this season other unexpected arrivals had crowded her from the lists. She had chosen to remain in her summer house rather than call remarks to herself by taking apartments, as she had done.

Twenty years ago she had been a beauty and a belle; she was a beauty and a belle still, in spite of her seven-and-thirty years.

She had superb masses of red-brown hair, and a skin of that fair, delicate, yet firm tissue which is the longest to resist the encroachment of crow's feet and wrinkles, and which has need of no cosmetics to reproduce its freshness. She had a fine form, a tapering waist, and a shapely arm and hand. She never attempted younger beauties, acknowledging to thirty years, and drew a coterie of solid elderly men in her train, varied sometimes by extremely youthful ones, whenever she moved in social circles.

She was fond of the excitement of fashionable life, and was sighing now for some diversion from the quiet of her well-ordered little household. Such a diversion came in a manner most unexpected.

She caught a glimpse of something bright flash past the window, and a moment later the door of the room where she sat was thrown violently open, and an odd little figure dashed in. It looked like the figure of a child, with close-set dusky hair blown in a tangled disorder of rings all over her little head. A piquant face, all in a flush with violent exertion and excitement. A vivid scarlet dress, tucked short, and rent in a dozen places, and neither cloak nor hood, though it was cold, clear wintry weather.

Miss Gardiner started to her feet, in utter amazement. At the same moment a prolonged, distant whistle sounded from without, and the uncemonious visitor rushed past the lady to see that the savage brute, whose fangs she had just escaped, reluctantly obeyed its master's call.

They agreed between them, at last that Wert should remain with the hound to keep watch, while the other should return to the town and procure a warrant to search the place.

Miss Gardiner seeing him depart, guessed his object and imparted her supposition to Justice.

"It will be three hours before he can accomplish his mission and return," said she.

"Meantime, you and I, my dear, will have a cozy little breakfast together, and you shall tell me your story briefly as you can that we may decide upon some plan of action."

She ran for hot coffee and fresh dishes; and, half an hour later, seated at the dainty little board, Justine repeated the tale briefly and clearly, with few reservations.

"I presume you knew me from the description given in the paper," she concluded, by way of comment. "If my estimable guardian had only inserted it—Lost, stray, or stolen: From the premises of the subscriber one early winter night, a little brown, black or yellow girl, wearing frizzed hair and balmoral boots, with a remarkable lightness of cranium and nimbleness of tongue which are apt to get her into more difficulty than she can gracefully make her way out of: Any one promising to take said brown, black or yellow girl, permanently off my hands, carefully returning the balmoral boots and frizzed hair aforsaid, will be greeted with the heartfelt thanks of her distressed guardian. I've no doubt it would have expressed his actual sentiments to a dot."

She uttered a startled cry and sprung to Miss Gardiner's side.

Trampling over the frozen road came the two men, with the hound running before, pulling impatiently at the thong which Wert had again secured to her wrist.

"They are coming," cried Justine, in quick terror. "Oh, don't let them in; don't let them force me away! You are a woman with a woman's heart; will it not prompt you to befriend one of your sex who is in mortal danger? Oh, save me from falling into their power!"

Miss Gardiner put her strong, fair hands on the girl's shoulders, looking down into her face.

"I never saw you before, but I would have known you anywhere," she said.

"Your name is Justine Clare. I know all about you."

"Oh!" cried Justine, in mingled wonderment and apprehension. "Why do you look at me so strangely? You say you know me, but I would rather it had been that you will save me. What do you mean to do? I'll not be taken without at least one more attempt at escape."

"There's no insanity in the child's eyes," said Miss Alethea, as though speaking to herself. "My dear, your guardian has advertised you as deranged, and offered a large reward for your apprehension. Tell me to the best of your knowledge, are you crazy or not?"

"Crazy? No; certainly not!" cried Justine, indignantly. "Oh, madam, pity me! If I try to fly from them again that cruel bloodhound will be my death, and I will not be taken by such cowardly ruffians."

By this time her pursuers were knocking loudly at the outer door of the cottage.

Justine set her teeth and drew her breath hard.

She flew to the little breakfast-table, snatched a sharp carving-knife which lay there, and set her back to the wall with a defiant light in her eyes.

"I'll kill either them or myself before I yield," she cried, desperately.

"Calm yourself, my child," said Miss Gardiner, soothingly. "I will protect you so far as I may be able."

The knocking grew more violent, and bidding Justine remain where she was, the lady herself went to the door.

"My good men," said she, presenting herself before them, "what do you mean by creating such a disturbance?"

Wert, with his quick address, doffed his hat and bowed humbly.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," he said.

"We're searching for a poor, unfortunate young lady that we saw take refuge in this house. You've doubtless heard of her ma'am; she's Miss Clare that's lost her mind,

and I will go anywhere for the sake of my little Justine!" answered Clare, tremulously.

"My good men," said she, presenting herself before them, "what do you mean by creating such a disturbance?"

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A LITTLE POEM OF MULTIPLIED
LITTLENESS CUT THIN.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

The very smallest "end of nothing" take,
And whittle it down to the smallest point,
Then take and rasp that down to half its size,
Which you may split into two equal parts,
One of which you then may rasp away;
Reduce the other to the fourths its bulk,
And then diminish that by boiling down,
Part off at least one-half of what is left,
And grind at least seven-eighths of that away,
And break the balance into pieces small,
And then boil them down again,
Each one of which would be ten thousand times
More large than the little meanly heart
Of that diminished piece of human kind
Who cheats his friend that he may thrive him-
self.

The "Thousand Islands."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN THE WILDERNESS."

VI.—MY PROWESS AND JIM'S BATH.

We had many days of excellent sport, and of course I could not be happy unless I distinguished myself, by attempting to do something for which I had no natural capacity; and so I tried to row. It looks easy enough as you watch a first-class oarsman, but, somehow, the practice is harder than the theory. I knew that I had figured the theory down to a spot. I could not rest satisfied with that, but must try to carry it out in practice. I was on one of the islands with the rest, and after a hard morning's fishing, in which I had covered myself with glory by capturing a moskalonge nearly as large as the one taken by Viator upon the first day's fish, we got to talking about rowing, and I stated my belief that any one could row a boat, and that I could row as well as any of them!

"Ah, Mossu!" said old Joe, "zat is impossible. You must understand zat it require constant practice to row ze boat viz precision and effect."

But I knew better, and at last old Joe gave up. "Aha, Mossu Scribble," he said, "you'll go to ze island ovare yonder viz ze boat, and I'll all row from zis island and back before you'll all arrive yondare."

I offered to bet fabulous amounts that he could not do it, and finally Viator backed Joe to the extent of one of Dunlap's best tiles. I was as certain of that hat as if I had it on my head, so I took Billy's boat, and Viator, acting as starter, stood upon the bank and gave us the word, "Go."

We went. Did you ever see a tortoise racing with a horse—a fox with a centipede, or any other ridiculous match of that kind? It would have done you good to see that old Frenchman walk away from me. I never saw any thing like it in all my life.

Somewhere, things did not seem to work right, and I soon had a fine panoramic view of the boat containing old Joe, rapidly placing a wide stretch of water between us. Every stroke of his sculls seemed to put him ten feet "to the good," although I dug the oars into the water with all my force, and pulled for dear life. It was awful work, I tell you, for the sun was boiling down on me like a fiery furnace, and the perspiration streamed from every pore.

As I grew more excited, I forgot to "feather," and one scull just touched the water, while the strong stroke I pulled with the other brought her completely round, pointing to the island I had just left. I got her about again, and for about a hundred yards or so, did yeoman service, but, as my hopes were rising—the hope which "blooms eternal in the human breast"—both sculls missed fire, and I went over on my back, flourishing my heels in the air in a decidedly ungraceful manner. I don't advertise to be very "toughy," but the hyena laughter of Viator and Jim at that moment was simply maddening. I determined to get to that island before old Joe got back, or break something, and struggling up on the thwart, headed once more for the goal and laid my muscle to it.

Oh! My knuckles foamed amidships, and took a neat bit off the ridge of my left hand, for, of course, I was rowing with the wrong hand uppermost. I said some adjecives and went on my way, the bow of that infernal boat dancing about like a feather blown by the wind. Do what I would, it was no use; she would not head straight.

But I was tooling along quite well now, and had got nearly half-way to the island, when I heard the rapid dip of oars, and old Joe passed me like a whirlwind, sitting easily in his boat, his sculls rising and falling with the regularity of clock-work. It was mighty trying to have to give it up, but I knew that he would get back long before I could reach the island. The skin was all off the back of my neck, and what was the use of sweating your heart out over an impossibility? But then, to turn back and bear the contumely and scorn which would be heaped upon me by that villain, Viator, who seemed to take delight in the torments of the unhappy! By the time I got the boat fairly headed for the island, old Joe was paddling up to the bank, with a smile upon his grim old face, and a burst of fiendish laughter was borne across the water to me. I got back at last, but I felt dreadful bad, too, and a small knot-hole would have sufficed to hide my shame.

"Yes," said Jim, who had joined my persecutors, "we'll put Scrib. up against Josh Ward; he rows in such perfect time." Now it is bad enough to pay for a new hat, without bearing humiliation and reproach from your conquerors, and there was a coolness between myself and the rest for an hour or two; even my cherished pipe did not have its usual soothing influence.

But, they laugh best who laugh last, and before that day was over the torrent of laughter turned upon Jim, who had enjoyed my defeat so much. We were out upon the river, and I had the seat in the stern, while Jim occupied the seat facing me. Down in the lake water we could see the shadowy outlines of the tall ferns, and among these lurk the big fish, many of which we had enticed from the depths as the glittering spoon passed over them. Suddenly the left-hand rod bent so as nearly to touch the water, and up started Jim to seize it. As he did so, he caught his toe upon a stretcher, and before Billy could put out a hand to aid him, Jim had gone on an exploring expedition into the water. He went out of sight with a gurgle and splash, and never shall I forget the look which his face bore a moment after, when, dripping with water, and with weeds and slime plentifully adorning his person, he rose slowly by the side of the boat and grasped it for support.

"All right, Jim," I said, as we dragged

him into the boat. "The world is all a fleeting show, isn't it? Wicked, wicked world! We can not sooner realize that 'sich is life!'"

Would you believe it? Instead of taking pleasure in the trite quotation he got mad and said he didn't like to ask a man to change his nature, but he wouldn't let a man to change his nature. A new object of scorn was hailed with delight by Viator, and through it all Jim sat dripping, with a serene expression upon his face. It is a great deal easier to laugh at a man than to be laughed at, as my experience goes.

We got into Clayton as soon as possible, where dry clothing and fluid comfort were administered to the victim; but it was some hours before "Richard" was himself again.

The Senator's Crime.

A STORY OF THE CAPITAL.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

"Ah! there he is now, Clare!—Philip Aubrey. Will you stand by me?"

"Yes, Morris; but—" "No qualifications, Clare Moselle," and the speaker's words were couched in a determined tone. "There is Philip Aubrey, I say, and I'm going to insult him. If he's what he claims to be—a true Southern gentleman—he'll fight. If he refuses, I'll brand him a coward in the very halls that ring with his eloquence and oratory. By heavens! he must fight me!"

"He's a crack shot, they say," whispered Clare Moselle.

"And did you ever see me miss?"

"No, boy," and the Creole's eyes flashed a look of pride upon his companion, "I never saw you miss a shot."

"Then don't call him a true shot," replied Morris Chardon, his eyes riveted upon a man who had just emerged from Willard's, and was hurrying along down the avenue. "If he kills me, why you'll see that I go under the ground decently, and should the opposite result come of the fight, why I see that he's buried. But let us hurry,

Philip Aubrey was at the bottom of all

Morris Chardon had accomplished his design, and he awaited the conflict with an impatience which the Creole noticed with a despondent look.

He and the senator had been on intimate terms for several years. Together they had traveled, drank and played; but now, as the reader has seen, they were bitter enemies, and why?

Of late Morris Chardon had relinquished his wild mode of living, and was now filling with credit no insignificant position under the Government—a position originally obtained for him by the man he was about to fight.

Six months prior to the opening of our story, young Chardon encountered Coralie St. Clair, the daughter of a distinguished New-Yorker, who had recently taken up his residence at the capital. To know the beautiful, pure-minded Coralie was to love her, and Morris Chardon was not astounded when his heart told him that she was the only creature who could make him happy through life.

Being of a confiding nature, he told his still friend Philip Aubrey, of the girl he would make his wife. The senator was charmed with the description; he would meet the lovely Coralie, and, aided by her generous lover, he met her. From that hour he resolved to make her his wife, and Philip Aubrey was a man who had followed resolutions to death's door.

With the cunning he seemed to inherit, for his features would indicate that he possessed but little that was natural, he entered upon his work. He ingratiated himself into the good graces of Coralie's parents, and dazzled by the name he bore and the wealth he had to command, they turned against Morris Chardon. For a long time the youth lived in blissful ignorance of the serpent's cunning, and when he opened his eyes to it was too late.

The coral lips which he had often pressed in love's divinest moment branded him a forger, a duelist, a gambler, and when he left Coralie's threshold, with the command "Never darken these doors again!" ringing in his ears, he realized the perfidy of the serpent's cunning, and when he opened his eyes to it was too late.

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Philip Aubrey was expecting a certain hour with feverish impatience, and that hour was to see him united for life to the beautiful Coralie St. Clair.

Ah! at last his plots were bearing the desired fruit, and he would take to his rich Southern home the fairest being in his nation's capital—one for whom he had striven hard—one whose ears he had filled with poison—one whose manly lover he had slain.

Already his fellow senators were preparing for the bridal hour, and the Chief Executive of America had promised to honor the occasion with his presence.

"There!" he cried, as he signed his name to the finished communication and threw the pen aside. "Now for the altar."

He rose to his feet, and was startled by a faint rapping on his door.

Since the duel, sounds had strangely startled Philip Aubrey, and though but three months had elapsed, ten, ay twenty years seemed to have been added to his age.

"Tis Madge," he said, referring to his confidential servant, and then he sprang to the door, and threw it wide open.

"Ma—My God!"



THE SENATOR'S CRIME.

Clare. By my soul! I believe he is quickening his pace. He is going to Coralie now.

"No, no, Morris; he's going to fight the gaudy tiger."

"Then we'll meet him in the animal's den," said Chardon, with a smile of satisfaction, and a short time later they saw Philip Aubrey enter a gambling establishment, the resort of senators and other public men, in the Congressional glory of Henry Clay.

They quickly followed the man they had trailed, and presently stood in the main gaming-room, where they found their man already seated at a table, receiving recently purchased checks.

"Who is that gentleman?—his partner?"

"Newcomb, from Alabama, who twice killed his man. Those Southern fellows can make better shots than speeches."

"It is no use to talk that way, Clare. You can't frighten me. For your sake, boy, I want to live; but—but what if I am killed?"

"Philip Aubrey shall never wed Coralie St. Clair!"

There was a proud flash in Morris Chardon's eyes, and his womanish hand stole to the Creole's still lighter and softer member.

"I thank God for you, Clare," he said, looking up into the Creole's eyes, "and, in dying, I will have the satisfaction of knowing that his accursed schemes will not succeed. Now for the battle. Come with me."

With the last word lingering on his lip, Morris Chardon stepped forward, his dark eyes flashing a world of hatred upon Philip Aubrey, United States senator and gambler.

The game at the oval table had just opened, and as the twain paused beside the players, Aubrey hurried a card upon the glistening marble, which drew a cry of astonishment from his opponent.

"Ha!" cried Morris Chardon, who stood beside the man whose blood he sought, "you are fortunate to-night, Aubrey. Two jacks still left, and a good supply of—"

With a glance at the youth, and an oath, Philip Aubrey sprang to his feet, and glared like an enraged tiger, into the calm face of the informer.

For a moment his blindness prevented him from recognizing Morris Chardon, but, when his passion yielded to a momentary quietude, he hissed forth his name.

"I'm glad you recognize me, Philip Aubrey," said the young man. "I sought you for a meeting."

"And, Morris Chardon, you shall not be disappointed. For your conduct of a moment since, consider yourself challenged. Name your weapons, time and place."

A minute later Philip Aubrey's friends were removing the little gaming-tables, and creating space for the performance of the "code of honor."

"All right, Jim," I said, as we dragged

this villain—Philip Aubrey, who had dared reply to Clay—Philip Aubrey, who might, with bright hopes, have looked beyond the son of a serpent.

It was almost immediately after the scene at Coralie St. Clair's home—the passionate scene which we have left to the reader's fertile imagination—that the wronged man sought the glittering serpent.

The walls of the gambling-house kept all sounds between them, and more than one duel had been fought in the chamber where fortunes were lost and won.

The hour was an early one for the assembling of gamblers, and consequently but five persons occupied the room—Aubrey, his opponent, our friends, and the fashionably-clad owner of the establishment, whose slight knowledge of surgery made him a participant in the duels fought on his premises.

"Stand firm, young man," said Philip Aubrey, with a smile, while the seconds loaded the pistols. "I've killed my man, and when I miss my mark, shoot me down like a slave."

Morris Chardon said nothing to this braggadocio, but glanced at the seconds, and then stepped to Philip Aubrey.

"Philip Aubrey, do you know what I'm going to revenge?"

"No, nor do I care," was the reply. "I know that I'm going to kill you—that's what I know, Morris Chardon."

Nothing disconcerted the youth, and he continued to the story of his base treachery, and received for his pains a laugh that sounded like the chattering of fiends.

At length the principals took their designated places, and simultaneously two pistols cracked.

Philip Aubrey groaned, reeled, but a moment later recovered his equilibrium, and gazed upon the scene before him.

Clare Moselle was lifting Morris Chardon's head from the floor, and between the staring eyes he saw a crimson spot—the mark of his bullet.

"Well?" Aubrey said, with the utmost sang-froid, when his second returned from the spot.

"It was a center-shot, Aubrey," was the reply. "He's dead as a herring. Come; Markham says we had best go."

"Yes, we'll go and drain the goblets over the pugilist's death," said Aubrey. "I didn't like to kill him; but he would have my blood, and curse him! he might have done me harm."

Then he glanced at the pallid face of Morris Chardon, smiled triumphantly at the keeper of the "hell," and thrust his arm through Newcomb's, his second's.

They had nearly reached the door when a terrible sentence fell upon Philip Aubrey's ears:

"Philip Aubrey, you have killed your son!"

It seemed to issue from Newcomb's lips,

so distinctly the words were pronounced, and the Southern senator turned upon his companion, as though struck in the side with a lance.

"My God! Did you speak, Newcomb?"

"Speak? No, Aubrey. Why?"

"I thought some one spoke," he said, trying to chase the terrified expression from his face; "but I must have been mistaken. Open the door, quick! I want to quit this place."

He was fearful that that thrilling sentence would ring in his ears again, and as he hurried—almost ran—from the "den," he recalled a year whose memory he would give his great wealth to drown in the waters of oblivion.

The winter session of 18—was drawing to a close, and Philip Aubrey sat at his desk, rapidly penning a letter, and every now and then he glanced at the ormolu clock on the antique mantel, as though he feared the appearance of a certain hour before he had finished his work.

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